



REFLECTIONS

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These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.

Revelation 3:7-8

Blessed Gifts

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, the saying goes. The same holds true with blessings, I think. But when painful setbacks strike, or difficult times fall, how can beauty be seen or blessings felt from them? Well, God takes us on a journey through this world, and each step of it prepares us for some other step we will face along the road. And that preparation becomes a blessing.

Though far from shattering, an unexpected setback struck one day that changed the course my life might have taken. My dad's message to me that day pained him. At least it seemed that way by the saddened look on his face and descending inflection in his voice. "Oh, Richard there's just not room," he said.

No father wants to turn away his son, especially when he turns him away from following in his own footsteps. But my dad did. He did because he thought it best for me, but also because he painfully knew there was no future in the family business.

Daddy closed a door that day. A path of life, a career, a dream to grow the business my grandfather began was not to be. Today I wonder how life would have been if he had told me differently—if he had allowed the pain of turning me away to sway him to encourage me to join the business. But he did shut the door and it redirected my life's journey down a different road to a different dream with a purpose that would not have otherwise been. The door that shut that day proved to be one of God's most blessed gifts.

I heard it explained that blessings come from the hand of God for my good, his glory, and the good of others. God blesses us with a beautiful place to be and all we need to travel through life for a time. Along the journey, He opens doors that no one can shut, and He shuts doors that no one can open. My dad was a messenger that day. But he delivered God's message. Doors, whether opened or closed, direct us to the places God calls us to be. Both are blessed gifts, "*a lamp to my feet/ and a light for my path.*" So, may we, "*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

And God's will is a blessed gift.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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